# Iowa Head Start State Collaboration Office Report to the Region VII ACF April to June 2006

Tom Rendon Iowa Head Start Collaboration Iowa Department of Education Grimes State Office Building Des Moines, IA 50319-0146 515-242-6024 tom.rendon@iowa.gov

### **Child Care:**

- Since the launch of Iowa's new Quality Rating System (QRS), more than 400 applications have been sent out to interested programs and six completed applications have been received. The programs also has distributed a new brochure and a website (<a href="www.dhs.state.is.us/qrs">www.dhs.state.is.us/qrs</a>). Since various Environment Rating Scales are the basis for some of the QRS levels, training in the scfsales will take place in teach of the state's five CCR&R regions over the next few months.
- Iowa HSSCO sponsored a 90-minute ICN session on Monday, May 22, with Child Care Unit Manager Jody Caswell. Jody has been assigned departmental oversight for QRS for the Department of Human Services. There is a VCR of the session available for grantees who were not able to participate. The session surfaced a couple issues:
  - O Directors education The QRS gives 2 points for center directors who have a current National Administrator Credential (NAC). The definition of a center director is the person who is listed as the director on the DHS license. In many cases, Head Start agencies have put the Head Start director's name as the director on each license. This means that directors with 4-year degrees, in some cases graduate degrees, will have to attend a NAC training to receive the NAC points. Meanwhile, many Head Start centers have sent local site managers or others on management staff to NAC training, but that won't count for QRS purposes since their names are not on the center's license.
  - O Nurse Consultants For required and accrued QRS points in the health and safety category, programs must complete a health and safety assessment and then have a trained nurse consultant visit the programs to verify the assessment and other documentation. In practice, these consultants cannot be Head Start health specialists unless they have attended a Healthy Child Care Iowa Nurse Consultant training. Some programs are considering this option. Iowa HSSCO usually informed health consultants about these opportunities. In fact, a round of training will begin this fall. Training dates are scheduled for September 26-29 and November 8-10.
  - Local Consultants Grantees are encouraged to contact their QRS regional consultants with questions or needed support. A list of those consultants was sent to all program directors.
- The Iowa TEACH Project has moved to temporary quarters following the dissolution of Iowa Child Care and Early Education NetWork. It will operate under Child Care Services Association of North Carolina until a new non-profit agency to hold the state license. That process should be completed in the next six months or so. All communication regarding

- TEACH should be made to Barb Merrill, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® IOWA, P.O Box 3326, Des Moines, IA 50316. Iowa TEACH offices will be located at the ISU Extension Office in Des Moines (5201 NE 14<sup>th</sup> Street).
- Iowa HSSCO participated in the May 11 meeting of the State Child Care Advisory Council. The state collaboration officer serves as the representative from the Iowa Department of Education on this Council as well as on the executive committee and as a chair of its systems committee. Working with other members the committee has been exploring ways to improve the child care assistance (CCA) system with a series of policy changes and incentives to encourage more child care providers to take CCA children.v

# **Education/Professional Development:**

- The Education Committee of IHSA met via conference call on May 3. Julie Lang, chair, presented a summary of plans for next year at the May IHSA Board Meeting. A final plan will be available in August to aid program planning. Iowa HSSCO serves on this committee.
- An IHSA-sponsored training on "Science in the Early Childhood Classroom" took place Monday, May 8, at Des Moines Area Community College. Iowa HSSCO helped make arrangements with the Regents' Center for Early Developmental Education the University of Northern Iowa and promoted participating besides Head Start. Fifty six participants from 11 grantees participated in a full day of science activities based on constructivist principles, including hands on experimentation with sound, bubbles and ramps, as well as participation by Shared Visions, AEA specialists and private preschools. This follows from last year's collaborative training on mathematics.
- The Region VII Head Start Leadership conference took place in Kansas City on May 24-26.
- New PITC classes will be offered in Des Moines (beginning June 14) and Cedar Rapids (beginning June 14). For registration and more information contact Heartland AEA for Des Moines on its website (<a href="https://prodev.aea11.k12.ia.us/4DCGI/EC002099710701INV">https://prodev.aea11.k12.ia.us/4DCGI/EC002099710701INV</a>) or with Grant Wood AEA at (<a href="https://www.aea10.k12.ia.us">www.aea10.k12.ia.us</a>).
- IHSA will sponsor a Gesbeck training on September 12-14 in Iowa. More details will be available soon. The training will focus on fiscal and program management.
- Iowa HSSCO continues serves on the executive team of the Iowa Early Care, Health and
  Education Congress planning committee. The congress is scheduled for November 14 and 15,
  2006. Keynoters include Adele Robinson, Advocacy Director for NAEYC. A full list of
  workshops are also planned in the areas of economic development, early care and education,
  health, family diversity and support, community partnership and child assessment and
  outcomes.
- Iowa HSSCO continues to participate in statewide efforts to develop an early childhood professional development system being developed by the professional development component group of Early Childhood Iowa. Efforts include developing goals and strategies around these aspects of such a system: *Leadership*, *Regulations and Standards*, *Education*, *Articulation*, *Training*, *Compensation and Evaluation*.

#### **Children with Disabilities:**

Iowa HSSCO recruited eleven Head Start programs to its first year of the new statewide launch of Positive Behavior Supports. Head Start will be piloting a new effort in Iowa to initiate "program-wide PBS." The program-wide model includes clearly defined behavioral expectations, strong technical assistance and ongoing support, as well as a consistent datagathering to measure progress. The effort is being coordinated with a long-standing initiative of the Iowa Behavioral Initiative which has being doing school-wide PBS for the past three years. Iowa HSSCO serves on the early childhood work group of the statewide PBS coordinating council. The ten participating grantees and one delegate include: Drake University Head Start, Des Moines Public Schools, Hawkeye Area Community Action Program, MATURA Head Start, Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc., North Iowa Community Action Organization, Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation, South Central Iowa CAP, Inc., Southern Iowa Economic Development Association, Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc., and Your Own United Resources, Inc. Participating programs had to make a commitment to develop granteewide teams and local site teams, involve full participation by management and disabilities staff, participate and support all data gathering activities, work closely with Area Education Agencies and commit to full participation in all training. The effort is being paid for by funding from the Iowa Department of Education. The effort will kick-off at a training on September 18 and 19.

### Health:

- Iowa HSSCO is collaborating with the Iowa Departments of Public Health, Human Services and Management (Iowa Community Empowerment) to fund the development of a new maternal depression screen and a series of train the trainer events. The screen is for mothers of all young children, not only mothers of infants and toddlers. Twenty-five trainers were selected through an application process and include five from Head Start or Community Action Agencies. Those individuals include: Jane Heithoff (Community Opportunities, Inc), Kimberly Tweedy (Drake University Head Start), Marlene Hoelker, (Community Action of Siouxland), Jana Perrin and Darlyne Yagla (Mid-Iowa Community Action). The first training session was held on June 23. A second training on September 29 will follow. For more information, visit the website for this project at <a href="http://www.state.ia.us/earlychildhood/Maternal\_Depression\_Training/index.html">http://www.state.ia.us/earlychildhood/Maternal\_Depression\_Training/index.html</a>.
- Iowa HSSCO drafted a brief report on nutrition activities in Iowa Head Start programs. The report showcases the work Head Start is doing in the area of promoting fruit and vegetable consumption, as well as nutrition education efforts for children and parents. These will be showcased in a statewide State Nutrition Action Plan under development by the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Iowa Nutrition Education Network.
- The Head Start/Early Head Start Oral Health Work Group met on June 7 to review 2006-07 work plans. One goal is to increase fluoride varnish activities among grantees by encouraging cooperation between local dental hygienists and Title V agencies. The grantees we will be working with include Community Action of Southeast Iowa, Hawkeye Area Community Action Program, MATURA Action Corporation Head Start, North Iowa Community Action Organization, Southern Iowa Economic Development Association, Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc., West Central Development Corporation Head Start, and Your Own United Resources, Inc.

The group also learned about the I-Smiles plan from the Iowa Oral Health to include support for a dental hygienist at every Title V agency. These hygienists will provide an initial assessment of children, preventive services and parent education. Based on that assessment will set up an

appointment with a dentist for an exam and for treatment either on routine schedule (annual exam) or within six months, three weeks or immediately based on the presence of signs of oral disease.

The group will work with HACAP to participate in an effort to disseminate Xylitol to Head Start mother to see if that has an effect on oral disease among children beginning this September. If the efforts prove successful we may expand to other programs. Delta Dental is supplying the xylitol.

## **Family Literacy:**

- Seven Head Start programs have joined Iowa Public Television (IPTV) book club program for the coming year. Those programs include Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Drake University Head Start, HACAP, SIEDA, Community Action of Siouxland, Northeast Iowa Community Action and Tri-County. Data from the past year show an increase in adults and children served. Pre/post surveys reveal positive changes in reading behavior by parents including reading to children, talking about new words in the story, answering children's questions while reading, asking children questions about the story and using the IPTV Learning Triangle (combining reading activities with a children's TV program and a related activity.) Iowa HSSCO provides support for the book club program.
- Iowa HSSCO read family literacy grants being awarded by the Iowa Department of Education for community colleges. Nearly a dozen colleges received these grant awards that follow the National Center for Family Literacy model.

# **Community Services**

- Iowa HSSCO worked with Iowa State University Extension to develop a proposal for ACF to fund a healthy marriage and fatherhood initiative with the support of the Iowa Head Start Association. While two proposals were originally considered, only one was sent off for funding.
- As a result of a meeting set up by Iowa HSSCO between Community Empowerment, Head Start Directors and Community Action Programs Executive Directors, Iowa HSSCO will develop a tool on ways Head Start can collaborate with Empowerment.

## Advocacy

- Iowa Head Start Association co-hosted a legislative breakfast event on the value of pre-K along with Iowa Community Empowerment, the Iowa Department of Education and others on April 6<sup>th</sup> at the Iowa State Capitol. Susan Illgen, from the Oklahoma Department of Education, shared information about her state's work as well as information from two Iowa preschool programs shared their stories. The message from the morning emphasized the value of coordinated and high quality preschool programs and the necessary funding it requires.
- The 2006 Legislative Session has concluded. The end result was almost \$20 million in new money to early childhood. Links to the final education appropriations bill were forwarded to directors in early May. In summary, the new dollars included:
  - an additional \$5.5 million or so in preschool scholarships
  - \$5 million, approximately, for parent education programs, including home visitation services for children 0-3 and statewide coordination of family support programs
  - \$1 million to seed a venture capital fund to support early childhood programs. The state plans to match private contributions in an effort that will be designed by a business advisory council.

Iowa Head Start State Collaboration Office, April-June 2006 Report Page 5

- additional funding support for technical assistance and professional development.
- additional funding for mental and dental health initiatives.
- increased funding for the Family Development and Self-Sufficiency (FaDSS) program.
- increased funding for energy assistance.
- increased Medicaid reimbursement rates.
- As a result of passed legislation, at least four groups are gathering to make decision about spending dollars and program development:
  - Quality Issues A team from Empowerment will make decisions supporting quality improvement. They are open to ideas.
  - *Business Council* The make-up of this group is determined by legislation and it will make recommendations about how to proceed on public-private partnerships to support early childhood. Some early childhood folks from the State Child Care Advisory Council will represent child care interests.
  - *Professional Development* Iowa HSSCO has secured representation for Iowa Head Start Association on this group, and we have a volunteer through Drake University Head Start.
  - *0-3 Home Visitation Program* This is another effort Empowerment is heading up. Iowa HSSCO has been encouraging an open process in making dollars available so Early Head Start can participate in programming.

#### Other:

- The Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) Stakeholders met on June 13 in Des Moines. (ECI is Iowa's broad early childhood system evelopment efforts and incorporates the work of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems planning and funding. Take home messages from the June meeting include:
  - Advocacy efforts have made a difference in moving forward ECI's interests and system development efforts.
  - In an effort to connect legislation passed in the last session with the ECI strategic plan, gaps were identified in a variety a places that signaled areas for more work and ways to marshal new dollars to address these issues. (Expanding mental health services to 3-5 children, beyond the 0-3).
  - An effort will be moving forward to mine fiscal data on early childhood spending to allow us to show
    exactly how dollars are being spent and what the services they pay for actually deliver in terms of the five
    result areas around which the ECI strategic plan is written. Iowa HSSCO will serve on this group.
  - ECI needs to continue to reach out to business and engagement in the ECI work. The legislation that calls for a new Business Advisory Council may be an opportunity to do this.
  - ECI must continue to reach out to partners not present (e.g., mental health, law enforcement and the judicial system.)
- Iowa HSSCO is representing Region VII on the national Head Start State Collaboration Office conference planning team. The national meeting takes place on June 20-22 in Washington, D.C.
- Iowa HSSCO participated in the most recent meeting of the Early Childhood Coordinated Leadership group on May 31. This group was mandated by state legislation to explore ways to integrate and blend the work of various councils and groups in Iowa. The group involves leadership and staff on the following groups:
  - Child Development Coordinating Council,

Iowa Head Start State Collaboration Office, April-June 2006 Report Page 6

- hawk-i Board
- Head Start Collaboration Office Management Team
- Iowa Council for Early ACCESS
- Iowa Empowerment Board

- Maternal and Child Health Council
- MHDDMRBI Council
- Prevention of Disabilities Policy Council
- State Child Care Advisory Council

## The group moved forward with toward four goals:

- 1. Increase coordination between early childhood committees and councils to reduce or eliminate bureaucratic duplication and consolidate responsibilities as appropriate.
- 2. Increase the efficiency of working with federally mandated bodies.
- 3. Integrate service and service quality function to achieve improved results
- 4. Integrate state-administered funding streams directed to community based efforts.